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The Xavier NEWSWIRE



2014-15 Basketball Preview

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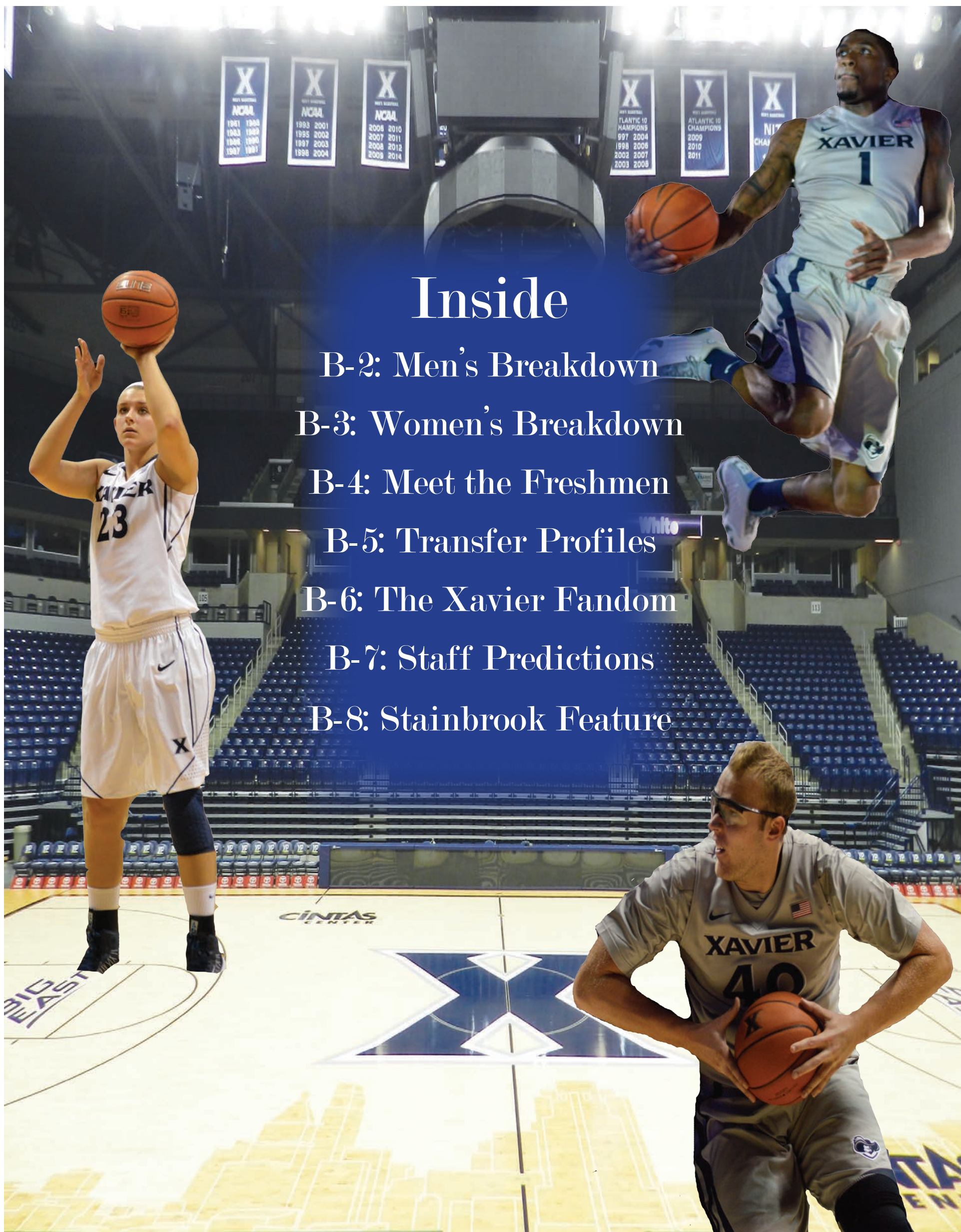
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October 29, 2014

Edited by: Nick McGill
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Basketball Preview

Big season ahead for the Musketeers

BY RYAN O'TOOLE
Staff Writer

Many believe Xavier has a legitimate opportunity to compete for the Big East championship this year, but the strength of the league presents quite the challenge. The Musketeers will face many tests as they move through their conference play.

Villanova University is returning most of its team from last year, making the Wildcats a favorite to win the conference.

With an experienced squad featuring Ryan Arcidiacono, Darrun Hillard, Josh Hart, Jay Vaughn Pinkston and Daniel Ochefu, four of whom are returning from last year's squad, the Wildcats will have stability and depth this year.

Nova finished 29-5 overall and 16-2 in conference play last season, losing twice to Creighton.

Creighton, which finished second last season, will most likely

face early-season growing pains after losing four of its best players, including Doug McDermott, who graduated as the fifth all-time leading scorer in NCAA Division I history.

Experts are confident in Georgetown this year. The Hoyas look to talented recruits, including Isaac Copeland, L.J. Peak and Paul

White, to make large contributions to the team this season.

These three have to potential to be the best of the Big East freshman class. The Hoyas are also loaded down low, with Copeland and Mikael Hopkins, a senior forward.

St. John's is loaded with guards and is looking to improve from

last year.

To get back to its winning ways, St. John's will need its starters to step up while keeping the same intensity that made them the best shot-blocking team in the nation last year.

The Butler Bulldogs are looking to right their ship too.

They started last season 10-2 before a heartbreaking overtime loss to Villanova sent them spiraling downwards.

The Bulldogs will be led by Kellen Dunham who led the team in scoring last season.

Elsewhere, Seton Hall, Marquette and DePaul are going to have to put in significant work if they want to be competitive in the Big East.

Providence, too, will struggle to have another successful season without key players Bryce Cotton and Kadeem Batts.

Edited by Corey Zielinski



The Musketeers will look to veteran leaders to push the team through its tough schedule.

Breaking down Xavier's non-conference schedule

BY ANDREW UTZ
Staff Writer

Xavier men's basketball begins conference play on Dec. 31 against Georgetown, but before then, there is a tournament and multiple non-conference games in which the Musketeers will compete.

The Muskies play at home for the first five games of the season. The 2014-15 season kicks off with an exhibition game against Northwood a Division II team from Michigan.

Over the 10 days, the team will be playing four teams at home. The regular season begins against Northern Arizona on Nov. 14. Four days later, Long Beach State comes to Cintas.

The Musketeers host Stephen F. Austin State University, which made it to the third round in the NCAA tournament last year, on Nov. 21. Just three days later, on Nov. 24, Murray State visits Cintas Center.

The Musketeers wrap up November with the Wooden Legacy Tournament, which hosts eight teams in California.

The first two days of the tournament will be played in the California State-Fullerton's Titan Gym and the final two are played in the Honda Center in Anaheim. Xavier competes in the second game of the tournament against San Diego on Nov. 27.

Other teams competing in the tournament including Princeton, Long Beach State, San Jose State, University of Washington, University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) and Western Michigan.

After the tournament break, Xavier returns to Cintas Center to host Alabama on Dec. 6.

The Crimson Tide finished 11th in the SEC last season with a 7-11 record. Junior Trevor Releford led the team last year in points per game, averaging 18.5. However, Releford was drafted as a free agent by the Atlanta Hawks.

The roster for Alabama is loaded with experienced juniors and seniors, with only four freshmen on the roster.

Following Alabama, Xavier will host IUPUI on Dec. 9. The Musketeers then hit the road for two games, starting in Missouri on

Dec. 13.

The Tigers were sixth in the Southeastern Conference (SEC) last season and are now putting a fairly young team on the court this season, with six freshmen and three sophomores making up most of the 13-man team.

Following their trip to Missouri, Xavier goes to Auburn University on Dec. 20. Auburn

finished 12th behind Alabama in the SEC standings last year.

The Tigers have a large junior class to support under-classmen throughout the season.

In its final game before conference play begins, Xavier returns to campus to play Florida Gulf Coast on Dec. 28.

The Eagles finished second in the Atlantic Sun Conference last season.

Midway through the conference season, Xavier goes to Cincinnati for the Crosstown Shootout.

This game marks the return of the annual game to the universities after playing at the U.S. Bank Arena for two years.

The Bearcats finished second last year in the American Conference, behind Louisville and ahead of the University of Connecticut.

The Bearcats field a balanced team from all classes and are looking for one of them to replace Sean Kilpatrick, who was signed by and then waived the Golden State Warriors this summer after graduating.



Senior Dee Davis will be a leader for the team.

2014-15 Men's Team Roster

Number	Name	Year	Position	Height	Hometown	Coaching Staff
10	Remy Abell	Junior	Guard	6-4	Louisville, Ky.	Head Coach: Chris Mack
0	Lary Austin Jr.	Freshman	Guard	6-2	Springfield, Ill.	
5	Trevon Bluiett	Freshman	Forward	6-6	Indianapolis, Ind.	
32	Kevin Coker	Junior	Forward	6-6	Plainfield, Ill.	Assistant Coach: Mike Peques
11	Dee Davis	Senior	Guard	6-0	Bloomington, Ind.	Assistant Coach: Travis Steele
15	Myles Davis	Sophomore	Guard	6-2	Plainfield, N.J.	
2	James Farr	Junior	Forward	6-10	Evanston, Ill.	
13	Makinde London	Freshman	Forward	6-10	Nashville, Tenn.	Assistant Coach: Rick Carter
55	J.P. Macura	Freshman	Guard	6-5	Lakeville, Minn.	Graduate Assistant: Michael Massa
24	Andrew Mitchell	Senior	Guard	5-10	Louisville, Ky.	
54	Sean O'Mara	Freshman	Forward/Center	6-10	Lisle, Ill.	
3	Brandon Randolph	Sophomore	Guard	6-2	Inglewood, Calif.	Graduate Assistant: Ty Sampson
1	Jalen Reynolds	Sophomore	Forward	6-10	Detroit, Mich.	Graduate Assistant: Joe Sullivan
40	Matt Stainbrook	Senior	Center	6-10	Bay Village, Ohio	
21	Tim Stainbrook	Sophomore	Sophomore	6-6	Bay Village, Ohio	
4	Edmond Sumner	Freshman	Guard	6-5	Detroit, Mich.	

Women’s basketball schedule breakdown

BY ISABEL SMITH
Staff Writer

The Xavier women’s basketball team looks forward to an exciting and challenging schedule as it enters their second season in the Big East.

This season will also be the second for head coach Brian Neal.

Neal is optimistic about the future of the team with four returning starters and nine newcomers, all full of talent and potential.

Last season left the team wanting more. The Musketeers will have the opportunity to put their hard work in the offseason on display with this season’s tough schedule.



The women’s team looks to improve after last season.

The team kicks off play against Wofford on Nov. 15 at Cintas Center.

The rest of 2014 will consist of several non-conference opponents like the Virginia Cavaliers from the tough Atlantic Coast Conference and the Robert Morris Colonials.

Xavier fans will get an early glimpse of conference action when the Muskies travel to Queens, N.Y., to play the St. John’s Red Storm and then to Milwaukee to compete against the Marquette Golden Eagles.

St. John’s is ranked second in the Big East preseason poll and will provide Xavier with great competition.

The Musketeers take on their crosstown rivals, the Cincinnati Bearcats, in the annual Crosstown Shootout.

This year’s matchup takes place on Dec. 14

at UC and will offer Musketeer fans nail-biting action.

The team kicks off the new year with two Big East games at Cintas Center.

The Muskies play the Creighton Blue Jays on Jan. 2 and the Providence Friars on Jan. 4.

Creighton has Marissa Janning, the reigning Big East player of the year and the selected preseason player of the year.

Xavier plays its arguably toughest competition, the DePaul Blue Demons, Jan. 11 in Chicago.

DePaul took a trip to the NCAA Tournament’s Sweet 16 and was unanimously selected to finish on top for the second year in a row in the Big East preseason poll.

Xavier welcomes DePaul on Feb. 8 to Cintas Center for another matchup.

The Musketeers finish out the regular season against other Big East opponents.

Some home-game highlights include the Georgetown Hoyas on Jan. 16, the Villanova Wildcats on Jan. 18, the Butler Bulldogs on Jan. 25 and the Seton Hall Pirates on Feb. 27.

The Big East preseason poll picks Xavier to finish ninth, but this year’s schedule offers opportunities to showcase the young squad’s growth and talent.



Sophomore forward Leah Schaefer (above) drives to the basket.

Opinion: Neal ready to move forward

BY ADAM TORTELLI
Staff Writer

Coaching college athletics may be one of the toughest occupations imaginable and Xavier women’s basketball coach Brian Neal faced just that tough situation last season.

Just weeks before the last season began, former women’s basketball coach Amy Waugh resigned, leaving the team in turmoil and Neal as the interim head coach. Now he continues his role as the team’s new head coach.

On top of the normal coaching duty of devoting your life to the organization, a head coach has to develop young adults and prepare them for the next level of competition.

Additionally, coaches must

spend their off-seasons recruiting prime talent from high schools. These players must not only fit the team’s scheme but also fit a mold that works well with the pre-



Neal takes his full reign this season.

existing roster.

Now, try taking all of those responsibilities and put yourself into the same situation as Neal.

Just three years removed from dominating Division III play with Thomas More College, Neal made his NCAA Division-I debut last November.

While Neal goes into the 2014-15 athletic year with a full off-season and his own recruits, this year’s roster lacks the fourth-year senior leadership that he leaned on last year.

The responsibilities of players like Shatyra Hawkes and Ashley Wanniger are now transferred onto the shoulders of senior transfer guard Maleeka Kynard and junior guard Jenna Crittendon.

Neal hopes to soon bring

Xavier women’s basketball back to the elite level at which it competed in his first year as an assistant, when former head coach Kevin McGuff led the 2010-11 team to the second round of the NCAA tournament.

Despite the departures, Coach Neal will certainly hope to improve on last year’s 8-23 record.

The difficult season became even tougher during Big East play when the squad hit a rough patch, finishing the season 3-15.

Brian Neal has undoubtedly been dealt a difficult hand to begin his Xavier career, but with the addition of a top-50 recruiting class and the returning scoring prowess of Crittendon, the team’s success is sure to begin improving this season.

2014-15 Schedule	
Date	Opponent
11/15/14	Wofford
11/17/14	Arkansas-Pine Bluff
11/20/14	Virginia
11/22/14	at Binghamton
11/26/14	Presbyterian
11/30/14	Robert Morris
12/3/14	at St. John’s
12/7/14	at Middle Tennessee
12/10/14	Monmouth (N.J.)
12/14/14	at Cincinnati
12/20/14	Lipscomb
12/22/14	at Kennesaw State
12/30/14	at Marquette
1/2/15	Creighton
1/4/15	Providence
1/9/15	at Seton Hall
1/11/15	at DePaul
1/16/15	Georgetown
1/18/15	Villanova
1/25/15	Butler
1/30/15	at Creighton
2/1/15	at Providence
2/6/15	Marquette
2/8/15	DePaul
2/13/15	at Georgetown
2/15/15	at Villanova
2/22/15	at Butler
2/27/15	Seton Hall
3/1/15	St. John’s

2014-15 Women’s Team Roster

Number	Name	Year	Position	Height	Hometown	Coaching Staff
0	Marquia Turner	Freshman	Guard	5-6	North Canton, Ohio	Head Coach: Brian Neal
1	Kindell Fincher	Freshman	Guard	5-9	Fort Wayne, Ind.	
2	Maleeka Kynard	Senior	Guard	5-6	Toledo, Ohio	
5	Kayla Davis	Sophomore	Guard	5-6	Brampton, Ont.	
12	Jada Byrd	Freshman	Guard	5-9	Lithonia, Ga.	
14	Briana Glover	Junior	Forward	6-1	Mason, Ohio	Assistant Coach: Carla D. Morrow
15	Aliyah Zantt	Junior	Guard	5-6	Reynoldsburg, Ohio	
21	Maddison Blackwell	Sophomore	Forward	5-11	Gahanna, Ohio	Assistant Coach: Bryce McKey
22	Erica Dawson	Freshman	Guard	5-8	Marietta, Ohio	
23	Leah Schaefer	Sophomore	Forward	6-1	Alexandria, Ky.	Assistant Coach: Garry Horton
24	Martha Thompson	Freshman	Guard	5-8	Solon, Ohio	
25	Anniina Äijänen	Freshman	Forward	6-2	Tampere, Finland	Director of Basketball Operations: Netta Smith
30	Raashaun Gaffney	Sophomore	Guard	5-8	Fairfield, Ohio	
31	Christina Ohlinger	Sophomore	Forward	5-11	Toledo, Ohio	
34	Briana Gladney	Sophomore	Guard	5-8	San Antonio, Tex.	
35	Jenna Crittendon	Junior	Guard	5-9	Union, Ky.	

October 29, 2014

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Basketball Preview

Meet the freshmen: A look at the newcomers

By **BRENDAN BURRIS**
Staff Writer

By the end of the 2014 college basketball recruiting period, the Xavier men's basketball team had what some have called the best recruiting class in the program's history.

During the previous season, ESPN even ranked Xavier's recruiting class no. 4 in the country.

Before the season begins, let's take a look at the six newest



Photo courtesy of Greg Rust
Larry Austin Jr., guard

to commit was Austin Jr., a 6-foot-2 point guard from Springfield, Ill. Austin withdrew his initial commitment to the Tennessee when it fired its head coach and subsequently signed his letter of intent to play here in Cincinnati.

Austin was a first team All-State player in high school and was ranked as a three-star prospect according to ESPN.

Known as a great defensive player, Austin should be a solid piece to this year's deep team.

Trevon Bluiett — A 6-foot-5 small forward, Bluiett comes from Indianapolis and was the high-



Photo courtesy of Greg Rust
Trevon Bluiett forward

est ranked member of Xavier's class, according to ESPN. Ranked as the 13th best small forward in the country, Bluiett had originally committed to UCLA, but similar to Austin, withdrew his letter of intent and later chose Xavier. During his senior year of high school, he averaged 36 points and 12 rebounds per game.

Widely known as one of the best 3-point shooters in the class of 2014, Bluiett should play a big role in his first year, one that could include taking the starting small forward spot early in the year.

Makeinde London — During his freshman year of high school, London was a 6-foot-1 point guard from Nashville, Tenn.

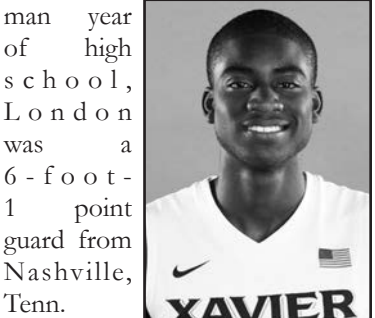


Photo courtesy of Greg Rust
Makeinde London, guard

Fast forward to today: the 6-foot-10 power forward is looking to make a solid impact for the Musketeers' team. Ranked a 4-star

prospect out of high school, London played high school basketball at the Montverde Academy in Florida.

London's all-around ability helped lead his high school team to a national championship.

J.P. Macura — The theme of this year's class seems to be having many players with great shooting ability, something Macura was known for all



Photo courtesy of Greg Rust
J.P. Macura, guard

his high school basketball years. Macura, who is from Lakeville, Minn., was a first team All-State player who scored 1,030 points in his senior season alone, enough to average 32 points per game.

Ranked as a 4-star recruit and FOXSports.com's "Top 10 shooters in the class of 2014," Macura looks to make an impact this year from behind the arc.

Sean O'Mara — At 6-foot-10, O'Mara played both basketball and football in high school, making him



Photo courtesy of Greg Rust
Sean O'Mara, forward

what coach Chris Mack called "one of the most physical high school seniors in the country." Another first team All-State player from Illinois, O'Mara averaged 23 points and 13 rebounds a game.

O'Mara is praised for his versatile play in the post.

Known as one of the best high-school post players in the country, O'Mara is primed to add to a stacked Musketeer frontcourt.

Edmond Sumner — The final member of the 2014 recruiting class is 6-foot-3 point guard Edmond Sumner from Detroit.



Photo courtesy of Greg Rust
Edmond Sumner, guard

One of two of Xavier's recruits to be featured in ESPN's "Top 100 in the class of 2014," Sumner is a combo point guard and shooting guard who excelled in many different facets in his high school games.

As a senior, he averaged 20 points and 3 assists per game.

Sumner has proven to be the type of player that can adapt to any role given to him.

Following the departure of Semaj Christon to the NBA Draft and the Oklahoma City Thunder, many college basketball insiders believe that Sumner could be the next to step into his role.

Christon leaves for the NBA

By **ISABEL SMITH**
Staff Writer

Former Xavier basketball guard Semaj Christon will begin his professional career with the Oklahoma City Thunder's development league team, the Oklahoma City Blue.

While at Xavier, Christon posted an impressive 1,034 points, 281 assists and 90 steals in his 64-game run.

He also made an NCAA tournament appearance and was selected for the Big East first team for the 2013-14 season.

After being drafted 55th in the NBA draft by the Miami Heat in June and following a few trades, Christon found his place in Oklahoma.

He spent his summer playing in the NBA summer league with the Oklahoma City Thunder in Orlando, Fla.

His agent says Christon will play for the Thunder's affiliate, the Oklahoma City Blue. With a star point guard, Russell Westbrook, and a quality back-up, Reggie Jackson, there is not room on the roster for Christon.

With the Blue, Christon will have the opportunity to log significant minutes and continue to develop his game. The Blue's season debut takes place on Nov. 14 against the Maine Redclaws at the Cox Convention Center.

Player profile: ready for a bigger, better year

Staff writer Ryan O'Toole sits down with sophomore standout Jalen Reynolds

By **RYAN O'TOOLE**
Staff Writer

Jalen Reynolds is ready for a breakout year. Cited by many as a player to watch in the Big East in 2014-15, Reynolds knows that it's time for him to step up and grow.

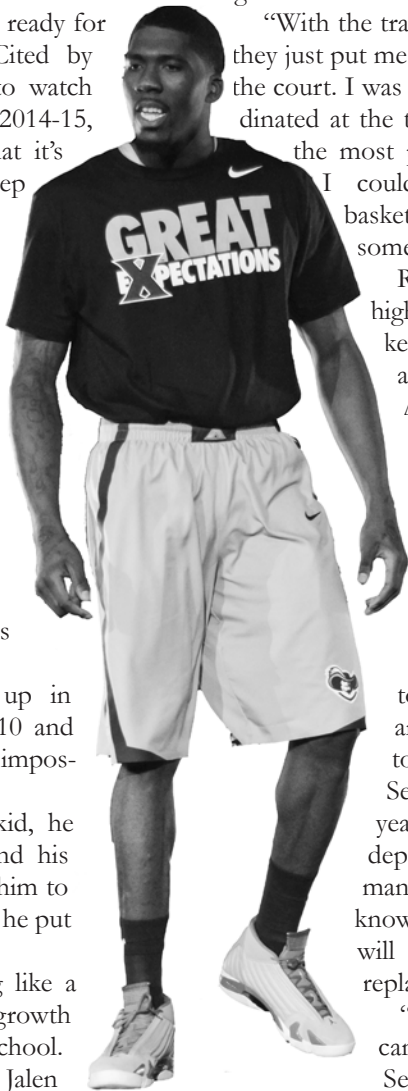
"(This year) I want to bring more energy to the team," he said.

"(I want to) carve out more of a leader role. Just helping my team when we're down and when we're up, just clapping and letting them know that everything is gonna be alright."

Reynolds grew up in Detroit. At 6-foot-10 and 232 lbs., he has an imposing frame.

However, as a kid, he was very skinny, and his mom did not want him to play basketball until he put on some weight.

He began eating like a mad man until his growth spurt hit in middle school. By eighth grade, Jalen was 6-foot-3.



Newswire photo by Adam Spegele

From that point on, he started taking basketball seriously.

"With the traveling teams, they just put me out there on the court. I was very uncoordinated at the time. But for the most part, I knew I could take this basketball thing somewhere."

Reynolds' high school basketball career at Brewster Academy saw him teaming up with former Musketeer star Semaj Christon.

He then came to Xavier and was able to play with Semaj for a year before his departure. Like many, Reynolds knows Christon will be hard to replace.

"One thing I can say about Semaj ... it didn't matter

where we were, what time it was ... if we were playing basketball, somebody was getting some buckets. Definitely a tough player. I loved and enjoyed playing with him."

Without Christon, the Muskies will be looking for other scoring options.

Reynolds, known mostly for his defensive presence and high-energy plays, will be asked to carry a bit more of the offensive load along with veteran and fan favorite Matt Stainbrook and new recruit Traevon Bluiett.

Reynolds knows that Bluiett, a highly sought-out recruit, will be important for them down the line.

"He is young and still has a lot to learn, but we are going to need him. He's just going to have to be ready to be thrown into the fire."

Looking back on his past, Reynolds is very thankful for the support he has received from his family.

He cited his older brother as



Newswire photo by Adam Spegele

The Musketeers will look to Reynolds for more high energy plays and more consistent play.

one of his biggest inspirations.

"He pretty much taught me everything I know now, as far as being tough on and off the court and being ready to attack when that ball is in my hands."

Another big inspiration to him came from his uncles.

"I wanna say thank to my uncles Terry and Troy for everything they have done for me, just for be-

ing there for me," Reynolds said.

Reynolds is eager for this basketball season to begin.

Fans of Xavier basketball know Reynolds has been blessed with a wonderful gift as an impressive athlete.

It's about that time of year where we get to sit back and see what Reynolds can prove on the court.

Edited by: Nick McGill
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Basketball Preview

October 29, 2014

Transfer athletes look to make a quick impact

By ADAM TORTELLI
Staff Writer

Cintas Center will be featuring an assortment of new faces in the 2014-15 basketball season. Both the men's and women's teams went through off-season facelifts, which included tough goodbyes for key players and cheerful welcomes to talented newcomers.

While Chris Mack and Brian Neal were able to bring in recruiting classes that ranked in the nation's top-50, possibly the biggest additions will come from the experience of the newest transfers.

Xavier women's basketball has been fortunate enough to bring in the leadership of senior point guard Maleeka Kynard. After graduating with a criminal jus-

tice degree from the Ohio State University in just three years this past May, Kynard will be eligible to play this season.

If coaching on an interim basis was not hard enough for Neal last year, he must now work to replace graduated Musketeers such as leading scorers Shatyra Hawkes and Ashley Wanniger, with Kynard and a talented freshman class.

For a roster lacking on-court experience at the college level, Kynard will be asked to carry this year's team through adversity and hold the ship steady throughout success despite this being her first year as a Musketeer.

While most transfers arrive to their new school after sitting out

a year and taking that time to acclimate themselves to a new campus, Kynard will have to make the turnaround quickly while leading underclassmen at the same time.

Transitions prove to be difficult for transfer students. "It definitely isn't easy, but I've already lived 'the college life' and we help each other along the way. The closeness and family-like atmosphere of Xavier gives me the comfort to be a leader. At the same time, I am able to bring an intensity and speed to get the girls used to playing college ball," Kynard said.

Meanwhile, Mack's boys are adjusting to life without leading scorer Semaj Christon or rebounding machines Isaiah Philmore and Erik Stenger.

Taking the more traditional route, Xavier men's basketball welcomes redshirt junior shooting guard Remy Abell. After playing two years for Indiana University (IU), Abell sat out last season due to NCAA rules.

Abell will be competing against a very talented group of guards to join senior point guard Dee Davis, whom he considers the hardest teammate to defend, in the starting lineup. "He's got (veteran) moves that you can't expect. When you put that with how quick he is and good his passes are, there's no one way to guard him," Abell said.

In two years at IU, Abell was part of Hoosier squads that made



Photo courtesy of bleacherreport.com

After sitting out last year due to transfer rules, Abell will look to make an impact.

back-to-back Sweet 16 appearances. Some of his former teammates include current NBA players Victor Oladipo of the Orlando Magic and Cody Zeller who currently plays for the Charlotte Bobcats.

When on the court, it may be hard to distinguish these two players from robots programmed for success.

"I'm a winner. Everywhere I have been I work my hardest to bring out the best in my team," Abell said.

In response to being expected to take a leadership position,

Kynard highlighted how actions make a leader, "I lead by example. If I want my teammates to be their best, I need to stay focused out on the court," Kynard said.

Despite this on-court nose-to-the-dirt mentality, both players take pride in their off the court selves that they describe as "silly" and "goofy".

Cintas Center will definitely have holes left by vacancies this season, but the experience and dedication from Abell and Kynard will soon fill these voids as they make their own legacies as Musketeers.



Photo courtesy of buckeyextra.dispatch.com

Kynard transferred from Ohio State and will be eligible immediately to play.

Women's team looks to its "X"-factors to lead the way

By ADAM PURVIS
Staff Writer

The Xavier women's basketball team is welcoming new players this season who are looking to make an immediate impact.

With the loss of three seniors from last year, the women's team returns with just a single senior, Maleeka Kynard.

A transfer from Ohio State, Kynard played her freshman through junior seasons as a guard for the Buckeyes and will bring the type of leadership that only a senior leader can.

Returning starter Jenna Crittendon will play for the Musketeers this year as a junior guard.

Crittendon returns after injuries ended her season last year. She ranked the third-highest scoring player on the team even with these missed games.

Before these injuries, Crittendon started in the first 21 games of the season.

In the 21 games Crittendon played, she led the team in free throw percentage (.766) and in rebounding with 6.9 rebounds per game.

Not only was she viewed highly on the team, Crittendon was named to the Big East Weekly Honor Roll and College Sports Madness Big East Player of the Week in December last year.

With great stats on the court and impressive achievements off the court, Crittendon can be an "X"-Factor and is a player to keep an eye on this season.

Sophomore Leah Schaefer will be returning this season as a forward. Schaefer had an impressive freshman year with appearances in 26 games and 24 starts.

With a successful start to her

freshman year, Schaefer's six rebounds per contest was ranked 13th in the Big East conference last season and 10th in defensive rebounds last season with 4.8 per



Newswire file photo

Crittendon returns as a team leader.

game.

Even with a foot injury in the latter half of the season, she was able to put up these impressive stats and played well against Georgetown in the first round of the Big East Tournament.

With this experience, Musketeer fans can expect Schaefer to be a significant player this season for the Muskies.

The Xavier's women's basketball team will return with much to look forward to with the arrival of a few players who were ineligible to play last season.

Erica Dawson was redshirted last season after enduring a knee injury during offseason workouts.

Dawson may not have been able to play last season at guard, but she made an impact during her high school career in Ohio.

Dawson was ranked 47th for her position during her junior year

of high school by the Collegiate Girls Basketball Report, and she was named first team All-East Central Ohio League and East Ohio Central League Player of the Year.

She broke many records at her school, and even broke the OHSAA single-season scoring record with 714 points.

Martha Thompson redshirted last season with a knee injury too.

With the same problem and position in high school, Thompson made her mark in high school as well with an impressive ranking by ESPN as 38th nationally.

With a young team full of other sophomores and freshmen looking to establish themselves as important attributes to the team, Xavier's women's basketball team will look toward its leaders as they head into the season looking for a hot start.

Muskie Madness excites eager fans at Cintas Center

By ADAM TORTELLI
Staff Writer

As happens each year, Cintas Center once again hosted a raucous crowd of more than 5,000 fans for 2014's highly anticipated Muskie Madness.

As a staple event for Family Weekend, students and their families packed the arena with fellow Muskie fans alike to ignite their support for this year's basketball season.

Players on both the men's and women's teams received their in-

dividual ten seconds of fame as they were introduced to the crowd with a song of their choosing.

Following the women's kickoff, a highly touted freshman class of boys received their first official introductions to the Xavier community.

Returning players and redshirt junior Remy Abell then followed suit only to prepare Cintas for head coach Chris Mack and his daughters to walk out rapping "Paul Revere" by the Beastie Boys.

Mack later explained his emo-

tions preceding his intro to students sitting behind the bench "I've never been more nervous in my entire life," Mack said.

The lights soon returned and shone down as freshman guard J.P. Macura dethroned sophomore guard Myles Davis in the men's 3-point shootout.

Macura then defeated Fincher in a head-to-head shootout to determine Xavier's ultimate marksman.

Shortly thereafter, the lights dimmed once more in prepara-

tion for the dunk contest for another freshman-versus-sophomore matchup for the title between Makinde London and Jalen Reynolds. After two rounds that included London receiving a pass from the crowd and Reynolds soaring over the ball rack, the contest ended in a tie. Both of the high-flyers walked away with perfect scores of 50.

Finally, the men's team took center court together in their scrimmage. In this competition, senior captain Dee Davis led team

Blue along with junior forward James Farr and hyped freshman forward Trevon Blueitt over the Gray Squad.

Gray's Davis led the way with 8 points on 3-4 shooting while Senior captain Matt Stainbrook hauled in five rebounds in just one 12 minute session.

Musketeer Madness once again excited fans for what should be another great season of basketball. Additionally, fans were able to view new players from both teams.

October 29, 2014

Basketball Preview

Edited by: Nick McGill
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A reflection on a lifetime of Xavier fanhood

BY ANDREW KOCH
Editor-in-Chief

March 17, 2007, Lexington, Ky.: Nine-seed Xavier is nine seconds away from upsetting No. 1 Ohio State, a favorite to win the NCAA tournament.

After dominating the second half, the Musketeers are scrambling to hold on to a 3-point lead. Buckeye standout senior center Greg Oden has just fouled out, and Xavier senior forward Justin Cage steps up to the line to shoot two free throws. Cage banks the first to make the score 62-59, Xavier.

One more free throw and Ohio State has just nine seconds to make up two possessions without its star Oden.

One more free throw and the Musketeers upset former Xavier coach Thad Matta and the Buckeyes to reach the Sweet Sixteen for just the third time in the school's history.

Cage takes the shot, and the crowd at Rupp Arena freezes. The ball rattles around the rim, spinning for a second that might have lasted forever ... and rolls out.

Ohio State grabs the rebound, charges down the court and senior guard Ron Lewis sinks a deep three to send the game into overtime.

In extra time, the fatigued Xavier team loses by seven. Ohio State would go on to play in the national championship game, while Xavier was boarding the bus back to Cincinnati. (My dad and I gape at each other in the nosebleeds, stunned into silence.)

Such is the life of a Xavier fan. In the grand tradition of

Cincinnati-based sports, the Xavier men's basketball team has had more than its fair share of heart-wrenching, "shoulda-woulda-coulda" games: a narrow three-point Elite Eight loss to Duke in 2004, the aforementioned second round loss to Ohio State in 2007, a double-overtime Sweet Sixteen loss to Kansas State in 2010 and the still-stinging First Four loss to North Carolina State earlier this year.

The Xavier fandom has not always been easy to defend. Like any other, the team has had its head-scratching losses and its off years (the missing the postseason in the 2012-13 season comes to mind).

And what's more, the events of the Crosstown Shootout in 2011 damaged Xavier's reputation and competitive edge both on and off the court, nearly blighting a promising landmark year for the program.

And as a proud Xavier fan, that day also led to many awkward, prying questions at Christmas dinner from my majority-Bearcat extended family.

But despite its setbacks, the program's success since 2000 makes one thing clear: Xavier always seems to be on the verge of breaking out, with each season bringing promises that "this is our year." It's been my great pleasure to watch the Musketeers shake off their "mid-major" label.

I have a lot to be proud of as a lifelong Musketeers fan.

While my friends go on about North Carolina, Kentucky, Louisville and Florida, my heart has always belonged to the

Muskies. From my first Xavier game at age 5 to yearly road trips with my dad to NCAA tournaments to playing courtside at Madison Square Garden with the Xavier Pep Band, I've stuck with my Musketeers through it all.

Even now, at least one of my

March Madness brackets always has Xavier winning it all.

And to some degree, my fanboying is justified. After all, the club has had its victories in addition to its heartbreakers: the team's first trip to the Elite Eight in 2004 (known as "the Run")

with another to follow in 2008, upsets against one-seed (the previously-unbeaten St. Joseph in 2004 and rival Cincinnati in 1996 and 1999) and a top-10 ranking team in 2011.

The program has also produced notable NBA players (David West) and rising stars (Jordan Crawford, Semaj Christon), plus alumni who have gone on to have successful careers in professional leagues overseas (Romain Sato, Lionel Chalmers, Justin Doellman).

Lifelong Xavier fans will remember former coaches, too, that have had successful careers upon leaving Xavier, including Skip Prosser at Wake Forest, Matta at Ohio State and Sean Miller at Arizona.

I remember hearing all of those names growing up and watching them play and coach and prove that Xavier Musketeers basketball is a force to be reckoned with.

And it's that history – more so than any preseason projections or number of Final Four appearances – that makes me a Xavier fan.

Xavier basketball has always been a staple in my family's life, and I'll always bleed navy blue.

While the Musketeers can break my heart – I may have even shed a tear after the 2004 heart-wrenching loss to Duke that kept Xavier from its first trip to the Final Four – I keep coming back to Cintas each year with high hopes and an "X-Men" hat.

Through the highs and the lows, Xavier basketball is a huge part of me, and I can't wait to see the Muskies back in action one last time as a student.

As they say, "this is our year."

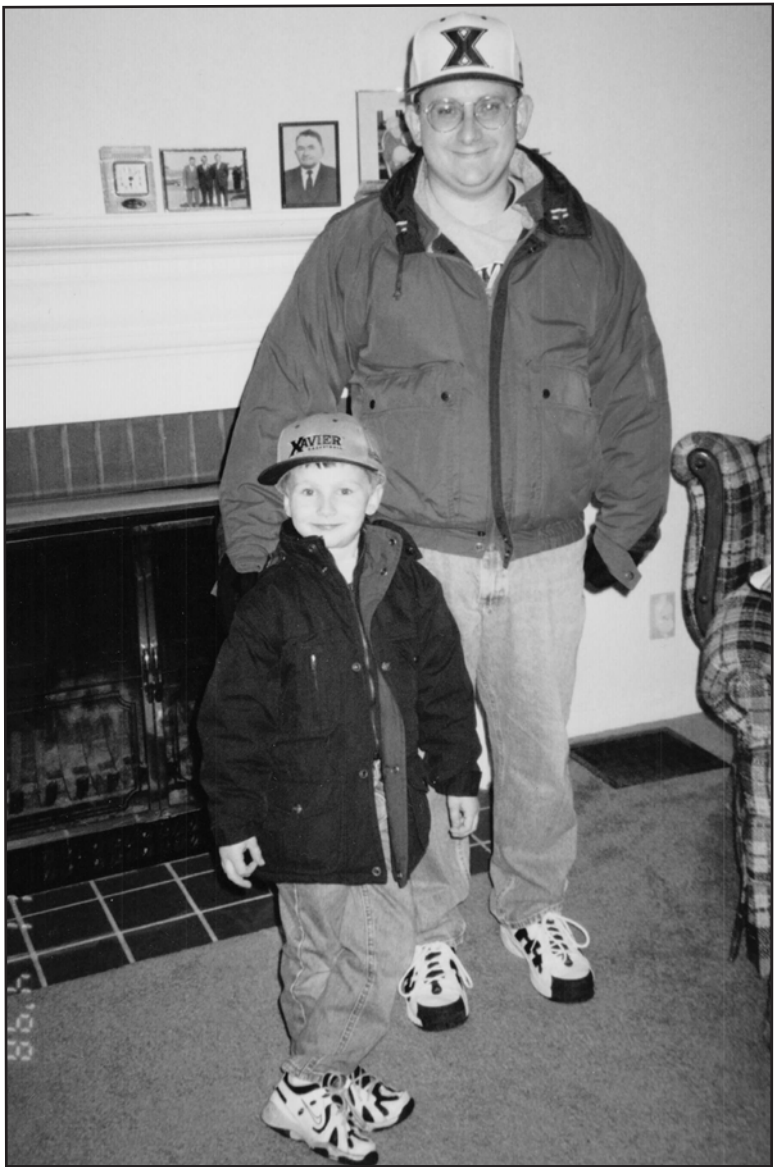


Photo courtesy of Andrew Koch

Editor-in-Chief Andrew Koch, then 5, prepares for a Xavier basketball game with his father Peter ('84) in 1998.

Changes come to Cintas, athletics as new season approaches

BY BRENDAN BURRIS
Staff Writer

As the new Xavier basketball season begins, Musketeer fans are looking forward to a year filled with great victories, intense rivalries and so much more.

However, during the offseason, Cintas Center staff was hard at work making some significant changes to the arena for the upcoming season.

These are aimed at enhancing the overall fan experience.

The most notable of these changes is clearly the resurfacing of the court, complete with the Cincinnati skyline below the arena's signature "X."

Over the summer, the Xavier athletic department was accepting fan submissions for a new court design for the 2014-15 season, many of which featured the city's skyline.

The final product was a collaboration of all the fan submissions and made it easy for the athletic department to decide on a theme.

The skyline image was also featured in the free

T-shirts given to students and fans at Musketeer Madness.

The highly-publicized NBA preseason game between the Cavaliers and Pacers marked the court's first national exposure.

Early reviews of the design have been overwhelmingly posi-

tive, according to Director of Basketball Administration Mario Mercurio.

Another major change for all Division I sports this year is the so-called "Shabazz Effect."

Former UConn point guard Shabazz Napier claimed that

while his team was en route to a national championship, there were times during the season where he struggled to get enough food to support him.

The NCAA promptly passed legislation during the offseason that allows for schools to pro-

vide unlimited meals and snacks to Division I athletes throughout the year.

With this rule in place, the Xavier athletic department has created a "Fuel Station" for student-athletes, who are now able to be fed by the university at any point.

Overall, according to Mercurio, changes to the NCAA rules happen frequently, and the athletic department must be able to keep up with those changes to provide the best possible situations for student-athletes while staying within the established guidelines.

Some other notable changes have been made to Cintas Center in the past months, such as improvements to the concourse.

As the new basketball season gets closer and closer, Cintas Center is prepared to provide the home court advantage that Xavier fans love.

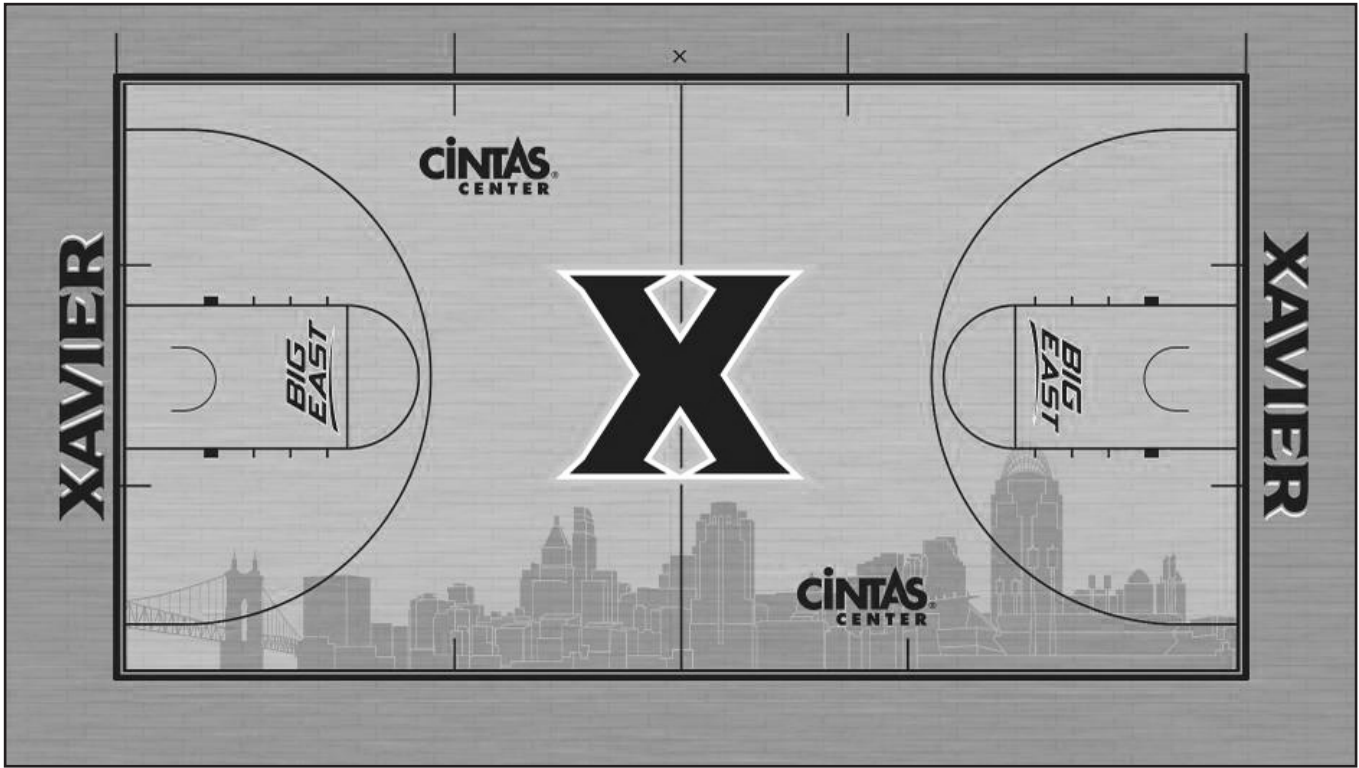


Photo courtesy of collegebasketballtalk.nbcsports.com

The new Cintas Center court designs features the Cincinnati skyline and is reflective of ideas from fan submissions.

What will it take to have yet another successful season?

Our sports writers were asked to give their input on what it will take to have a succesful year.

As we approach the beginning of the season, there are many questions that are yet un-answered.

The Musketeers are poised to have a great year but must execute perfection to succeed.

Staff writers share what they believe must be done to give Xavier fans a lot to cheer for this season.

Ryan O'Toole:

Take care of the basketball and be efficient.

Sloppy, inefficient play costs Xavier a lot

of losses that should not have happened last season.

Hit 3-pointers and make free throws.

Most of all, hustle hard and play tough defense throughout the entirety of every



Photo courtesy of Greg Rust
Dee Davis looks to be a senior leader.

possession.

Adam Tortelli:

For Xavier to be successful this year, a new face has to consistently put the ball in the basket.

With last year's top-two scorers departing, someone must carry the load.

Captains Dee Davis and Matt Stainbrook are both more than capable, but they are at their best when playing maestro on the court by using their experience to direct traffic.

Andrew Utz:

The biggest part of

being successful this year is getting a leader for the team.

Since Semaj was drafted, there is now a gap for a new leader to take charge of the team.

Stainbrook is vocal




Photo courtesy of Greg Rust
Matt Stainbrook returns for a final season.

enough on the defensive side, but an offensive presence is needed.

Dee Davis can step up here and make the plays.

Nick McGill:

It is essential to play at a high level at all times and not always play to the level of the opponent.

If veteran leaders are able to step up and perform well, others will follow suit. Production from the bench players will be imperative to produce a tournament-caliber team.

NEWSWIRE'S SWEET 16 PREDICTIONS

ISABEL SMITH Staff Writer	BRENDAN BURRIS Staff Writer	ADAM TORTELLI Staff Writer	NICK MCGILL Sports Editor	RYAN O'TOOLE Staff Writer
				
1. Louisville 2. Kentucky 3. Kansas 4. Florida 5. Duke 6. UNC 7. Wisconsin 8. Michigan 9. Mich. State 10. UConn 11. Arizona 12. Texas 13. Virginia 14 Villanova 15. Iowa 16. San Diego State	1. Kentucky 2. Florida 3. Arizona 4. Wisconsin 5. Michigan State 6. Villanova 7. Louisville 8. Duke 9. Oklahoma 10. Nebraska 11. Ohio State 12. Syracuse 13. Michigan 14. Arkansas 15. Kansas 16. Georgetown	1. Duke 2. Xavier 3. VCU 4. Michigan 5. Louisville 6. Arizona 7. Syracuse 8. Kentucky 9. Florida 10. Memphis 11. Villanova 12. St. Louis 13. Wichita State 14. Wisconsin 15. Gonzaga 16. Indiana	1. Xavier 2. Kentucky 3. Duke 4. Michigan 5. Michigan State 6. Villanova 7. Ohio State 8. Florida 9. Nebraska 10. St. John's 11. Syracuse 12. Georgetown 13. UConn 14. Wichita State 15. Ohio 16. Virginia	1. Duke 2. Texas 3. Wichita State 4. Connecticut 5. VCU 6. Michigan 7. Iowa State 8. Georgetown 9. San Diego State 10. Xavier 11. Arizona 12. Florida 13. Kentucky 14. Illinois 15. Wisconsin 16. Syracuse

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Basketball Preview

October 29, 2014

Inside look: A day in the life

Xavier Center gives us an inside look at the life of a Musketeer



Newswire photo by Adam Spegele

By MATT STAINBROOK
Staff Writer

As the basketball season approaches, I was offered the opportunity to write about what a typical day consists of for me, both as a college basketball player and a student.

Although Twitter, Instagram, newspapers and other forms of media provide a good insight into what goes on throughout the season, they often do not show ev-

everything. I want to do my best to show a true day as a Xavier men's basketball player. So here we go:

I wake up most mornings by at least nine o'clock. We practice six days a week, with one off day that varies based on games and travel. We currently practice twice a day every Tuesday and Thursday (8 a.m. and 3 p.m.), and that requires waking up at 6:45 a.m.

One thing that people don't always know is that we have weightlifting twice a week, no matter the circumstances. This means that even if we have two games or are traveling on the road for three days, we will lift.

At last year's Big East tournament in New York City, we traveled to a local health club and used their weights in order to get in our bi-weekly lift.

I typically lift mid-morning on Tuesdays and Thursdays because those are the days I have fewer classes. At this point, many people find their late mornings and early afternoons filled with classes.

Almost all players have class every day. After class comes practice.

Practice starts at 3 p.m., sometimes starting with a film of our previous game on what we need

to work on.

Practice is a gauntlet. We compete in many aspects of practice, keeping stats and scores, deeming winners and losers.

It ends around 5 or 5:30 p.m., giving players enough time to shower and head to any night classes they might have. For a lot of players the end of practice brings a chance to go to the cafeteria to grab dinner and then head off to study tables, which start at 7 p.m.

This is mandatory for freshmen and players who do not have a cumulative 3.0 GPA. This helps them set aside time to study and prepare for their classes ahead.

Also, mixed in throughout the day is an academic meeting with an advisor once a week, meetings with coaches and film sessions.

This is a typical preseason day for my teammates and me.

When the season starts, a whole new dynamic is added to my day. This is the time where life gets hectic and there are few moments to rest and relax.

For an away game, we travel to wherever we are playing one day in advance, which means if we play Tuesday at 7 p.m. in Omaha, we fly out on Monday after practice.

This means that if you are going to miss class, you need to contact your teacher ahead of time to figure out when you will make up missed work.

In an often already-

packed schedule, making up test or turning in homework early before road games becomes a necessity. Another area that gains more attention during the season is media.

Interviews and photo shoots become a game-day ritual; coach Mack and various players speak to both TV and print media at press conferences.

With all of this being said, I by no means want it to sound like we are overworked or treated unfairly. I wanted to show that with all of the perks and rewards for being an athlete, there are also many responsibilities.

As a scholarship athlete, I understand that my skills on the court and in the classroom are being compensated through my financial aid and the experiences we get live.

We travel to parts of the country that many people do not get the opportunity to and we do so in chartered flights.

We stay at some of the nicest hotels and are fed good meals, while still getting the opportunity to get an education from one of the best universities in the country.

I am appreciative for my opportunity to play for such a passionate fan base and look forward to the season.



Newswire file photo



Newswire photo by Adam Spegele